

Definitions and Methodology to Guide Interpretation of the Department of Child Safety Public Data Reports

Objective 1: Conduct the Right Number of Investigations to Achieve Child Safety

Chart 1.1: How does Arizona compare to other states on the percent of referrals screened out?

- A referral is a communication to the Child Abuse Reporting Hotline alleging abuse or neglect of a child. A referral may or may not meet the statutory definition of a report for investigation or assessment by the Department of Child Safety.
- The federal NCANDS definition of screened out referrals is: The number of referrals alleging child abuse and neglect that were screened out prior to being referred for investigation or assessment.
- The federal government calculates this measure using a denominator of all reports in the NCANDS Child File (screened in reports) plus the number of screened out referrals reported by the State in the NCANDS Agency File. The NCANDS Child File includes reports that had their final finding (substantiated or unsubstantiated) entered during the FFY rather than reports received during the FFY. Therefore, the denominator will include some reports that were received in prior years and will exclude some reports that were received in the current year.
- The data in chart 1.1 on total referrals and reports will not match data in the Child Welfare Reporting Requirements report, or data on the Business Intelligence Dashboard, because those data sources count referrals and reports according to the date the referral or report was received.
- The numerator for this measure is the number of screened out referrals reported by the State in the NCANDS Agency File. Screened out referrals are counted in the year in which the referral was received.
- When reporting the number of screened out referrals, Arizona included 2,408 reports that were given a disposition of Not Investigated or No Jurisdiction in FFY 2012. Reports are given a disposition of No Jurisdiction (NJUR) when they originated from military installations or Indian reservations where the state has no jurisdiction to investigate. The Department of Child Safety does not have jurisdiction to investigate reports involving an American Indian child living on an Indian reservation, and in some cases does not have jurisdiction to investigate reports involving a child living on a military installation. Note that the Child Welfare Reporting Requirements report includes these referrals in the total number of reports (screened in).
- The national rate equals the nationwide total of screened out referrals divided by the nationwide total of referrals received. Each child is equally represented when calculating the

national screen out rate. States where more children live, who have a larger total referred, have greater influence on the nationwide rate.

- The median state rate is the rate in the middle of the low to high distribution (half the states have a higher rate and half have a lower rate). Each state is equally represented when calculating the median, regardless of population size and number of children referred.
- Chart 1.1 will be updated annually, after publication of the annual Child Maltreatment Report by the Children's Bureau.

Chart 1.2: How many referrals were received in Arizona each month and how many were screened out?

Chart 1.3: What percent of referrals were screened out each month?

- This data is generated using the Business Intelligence Dashboard, Tableau report, Communications Received by Weekday and Hour. The Business Intelligence Dashboard extracts data from CHILDS.
- Referrals are communications to the Child Abuse Reporting Hotline about a concern for a child that are identified as a Hotline Communication or Report, in CHILDS, by a Hotline Specialist. Referrals include communications received by telephone, mail, or the on-line portal. Communications such as law enforcement requesting family history, additional information regarding an existing report, and requests for resource information are not referrals.
- Screened out referrals are communications identified by the Hotline Specialist as a Hotline Communication. A communication is categorized as a Hotline Communication when information received from a source does not meet the statutory criteria for a DCS Report and there is no open case and/or no open report (if there is an open case and/or open report, the communication will be coded as additional information, second source, or status communication).
- The number of referrals and reports can change over time to a small degree, in part due to communications categorized as Unborn Child Concern. These communications are flagged and may be changed to a report when the child is born.
- This data is not affected by the previously "not investigated" reports. All reports that were previously not investigated had been assigned for investigation before this data was extracted from CHILDS. These referrals are counted in the total number of referrals and screened in reports.
- Reports that originated from military installations or Indian reservations where the state has no jurisdiction (NJUR) *are* included in the number of referrals and *are not* counted in the total screened out referrals. This differs from the federal NCANDS data, where NJUR reports are included in the total number of referrals *and* are included in the total screened out referrals. These referrals are categorized as reports at the Hotline, but may be given a disposition of No Jurisdiction by the field investigation unit.
- Charts 1.2 and 1.3 will be updated monthly.

Chart 1.4: How does Arizona compare to other states on the rate per thousand children reported to the child protection agency during the year?

- The reporting rate in this federal measure is the number of unique children (ages 0-17) with a completed investigation during the year, per every 1,000 in the general population. An investigation is defined as completed when the last finding (substantiated or unsubstantiated) is entered for the Child Abuse Hotline report.
- This data uses a unique child count. Each individual child is only counted once in the total number of children reported during the year, regardless of the number of times the child was reported during the year.
- The median state rate is the rate in the middle of the low to high distribution (half the states have a higher rate and half have a lower rate). Each state is equally represented when calculating the median, regardless of population size and number of children referred.
- The national rate equals the nationwide total of children reported per 1,000 children in the nationwide child population. Each child is equally represented when calculating the national rate. States where more children live, which have more children referred, have greater influence on the nationwide rate.
- This data will be updated annually.

Chart 1.5: How many children per 1,000 of Arizona's child population were the subject of a DCSFS Hotline report?

- The reporting rate in this state measure is the number of unique children (ages 0-17) who were the subject of a DCS Child Abuse Hotline report received during the year, per every 1,000 in the general population.
- This data uses a unique child count. Each individual child is only counted once in the total number of children reported during the year, regardless of the number of times the child was reported during the year.
- Population estimates were obtained from the Arizona Department of Administration.
- This data will be updated annually.

Chart 1.6: What percent of children reported to DCSFS was the subject of a subsequent report within 30 days or 12 months?

- The denominator for all percentages is the duplicated count of children who were the subject of a DCS Child Abuse Hotline report during the year shown, minus the total number of children who exited care within 30 days after the report was received (regardless of how long the child stayed in care).
- A child is the subject of a DCS report if he or she was identified as an alleged victim in the Hotline report, or was identified as a victim through entry of an after-investigation finding of abuse or neglect.
- Because this is a duplicated child count, a child will be counted in the denominator each time he or she was the subject of a Child Abuse Hotline and was not removed within 30 days.

- This data will be updated semi-annually.

Objective 2: Remove Only Those Children Who Require It for Their Immediate Safety

Chart 2.1: How does Arizona compare to other states on the number of children removed, for the first time, per 1,000 children in the state's population?

- This data uses a count of unique children. A child is only counted once, regardless of the number of removal episodes he or she has during the year.
- Only children who were removed for the first time (first admissions) are counted in this data. Children who are re-entering care are not included, even if the prior removal was in a different year.
- This data is for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2012.
- The median state rate is the rate in the middle of the low to high distribution (half the states have a higher rate and half have a lower rate). Each state is equally represented when calculating the median, regardless of population size and number of children referred.
- The national rate equals the nationwide total of children removed per 1,000 children in the nation's child population. Each child is equally represented when calculating the national rate. States where more children live and more are removed have greater influence on the nationwide rate.
- This data will be updated annually.

Chart 2.2: How many children per 1,000 in Arizona are removed for the first time during the calendar year?

- This data uses a count of unique children. A child is only counted once, regardless of the number of removal episodes he or she has during the year.
- Only children who were removed for the first time (first admissions) are counted in this data. Children who are reentering care are not included, even if the prior removal was in a different year.
- This data is by calendar year (CY). The rate for 2012 is slightly different between chart 2.1 and chart 2.2 because chart 2.1 is by FFY versus CY.
- This data will be updated annually.

Chart 2.3: What percent of children reported to the Hotline are removed within 30 days, by report response time category?

- This data includes all removals following a Child Abuse Hotline report, including first time entries and reentries. A Child Abuse Hotline report is a referral alleging abuse or neglect of a child that was deemed by the Child Abuse Hotline to meet the statutory criteria for investigation or assessment by DCS.
- This data uses a count of duplicated children. If a child is reported more than once during the year, each of the child's reports is included in the denominator.
- Reported children include alleged or confirmed victims. Other children who were living in the home, but who were not alleged or confirmed victims, are not included.
- This data does not include removals that occurred more than 30 days after the report or that were not initiated by a Child Abuse Hotline report. For example, removals following an Action Request and removals on an open ongoing services case where no report is made to the Child Abuse Hotline about the new concern are not included in the count of removals.
- This data will be updated semi-annually.

Chart 2.4: How many children entered and exited during each six month period, and how many children were in care on the last day of the period?

- This data is generated using the Chapin Hall Foster Care Data Archive (FCDA), state customized data profile, which is updated with a new data extract from CHILDS every six months. Because a complete multi-year data set is extracted and updated with each submission to Chapin Hall's FCDA (therefore capturing new and corrected CHILDS data), historical data may have small changes after each update of Chart 2.4.
- Data in Chart 2.4 may differ to a small degree from data in Chart 24 in the Department of Child Safety's Semi-Annual Reporting Requirements report due to the date of extract from CHILDS.
- This data excludes entries and exits of children who are age 18 or older. Young adults can choose to remain in out-of-home care after their 18th birthday or to reenter out-of-home care if they were in care at age 18 or older. Young adults can remain in care until their 21st birthday.
- This data will be updated annually.

Chart 2.5: How many children were in care on the last day of the month?

- Historical data in Chart 2.5 is generated using the Chapin Hall Foster Care Data Archive (FCDA), state customized data profile, which is updated with a new data extract from CHILDS every six months. Because a complete multi-year data set is extracted and updated with each submission to Chapin Hall's FCDA (therefore capturing new and corrected CHILDS data), historical data may have small changes after each update of Chart 2.5.
- Up to the most recent six months of data is generated using Report 43, which extracts data from CHILDS and is run monthly. Data for these months will be replaced FCDA data when each new FCDA data set is generated.

- Data in Chart 2.5 may differ to a small degree from data in Chart 24 in the Department of Child Safety's Semi-Annual Reporting Requirements report due to the date of extract from CHILDS.
- This data excludes entries and exits of children who are age 18 or older. Young adults can choose to remain in out-of-home care after their 18th birthday or to reenter out-of-home care if they were in care at age 18 or older. Young adults can remain in care until their 21st birthday.
- This data will be updated monthly.

Chart 2.6: What is the age of children entering out-of-home care for the first time?

- This data is generated using the Chapin Hall Foster Care Data Archive (FCDA), state customized data profile, which is updated with a new data extract from CHILDS every six months. Because a complete multi-year data set is extracted and updated with each submission to Chapin Hall's FCDA (therefore capturing new and corrected CHILDS data), historical data may have small changes after each update of Chart 2.6.
- This data includes children who entered care for the first time. It does not include entries during the year by children who had a prior removal episode (reentries).
- This data will be updated annually.

Objective 3: Safely Achieve Faster Permanency for Children in Out-of-Home Care

Chart 3.1: What percent of first admissions exited to reunification by 6 months, 1 year, 2 years and 3 years?

Chart 3.2: what percent of children under age 1 exited to reunification within 30 days, 90 days, 6 months, 1 year, 18 months and 2 years?

- The data in charts 3.1 and 3.2 is provided by the entry year, showing reunification outcomes for the cohort of children who entered for the first time during each year. Children who exited care and reentered are only included in their first year of entry.
- Reunification is defined as an exit from out-of-home care to the physical custody of a parent. This could be the same parent from whom the child was removed, or the other parent. Many of these children continue to be court wards after reunification.
- This data includes reunifications following removals of 24 hours or more.
- Reunifications following a stay of one to seven days *are* included (as opposed to national reunification timeliness measures defined by the Children's Bureau for use in the Child and Family Services Reviews).

- This data is generated using the Chapin Hall Foster Care Data Archive (FCDA), state customized data profile, which is updated with a new data extract from CHILDS every six months. Because a complete multi-year data set is extracted and updated with each submission to Chapin Hall's FCDA (therefore capturing new and corrected CHILDS data), historical data may have small changes after each update of chart 3.1 and 3.2.
- This is current data, showing the percentage of children in each cohort who exited to reunification by December 31, 2013. This data will be updated semi-annually.

Chart 3.3: What percent of children exited to adoption within 1 year, 18 months, 2 years, 3 years, and 4 years?

Chart 3.4: What percent of children under age 1 exited to adoption within 1 year, 18 months, 2 years, 3 years, and 4 years?

- The data in charts 3.3 and 3.4 is provided by the entry year, showing adoption outcomes for the cohort of children who entered for the first time during that year. Children who exited care and reentered are only included in their first year of entry.
- Exit to adoption is defined by a court order of finalized adoption.
- This data is generated using the Chapin Hall Foster Care Data Archive (FCDA), state customized data profile, which is updated with a new data extract from CHILDS every six months. Because a complete multi-year data set is extracted and updated with each submission to Chapin Hall's FCDA (therefore capturing new and corrected CHILDS data), historical data may have small changes after each update of charts 3.3 and 3.4.
- This is current data, showing the percentage of children in each cohort who exited to adoption by December 31, 2013. This data will be updated annually.

Chart 3.5: What percent of children are still in care after 30 days through 4 years?

Chart 3.6: What percent of children under age 1 are still in care after 30 days through 4 years?

- The data in charts 3.5 and 3.6 is provided by the entry year, showing the percentage of children in each first admission entry cohort who remain in care as time passes. Children who exited care and reentered are only included in their first year of entry.
- This data is generated using the Chapin Hall Foster Care Data Archive (FCDA), state customized data profile, which is updated with a new data extract from CHILDS every six months. Because a complete multi-year data set is extracted and updated with each submission to Chapin Hall's FCDA

(therefore capturing new and corrected CHILDS data), historical data may have small changes after each update of charts 3.5 and 3.6.

- This is current data, showing the percentage of children in each cohort who were still in care on December 31, 2013. This data will be updated semi-annually.

Chart 3.7: Of children who exited to reunification, what percent reentered out-of-home care?

Chart 3.8: Of children who exited to reunification at age 0 through 3, what percent reentered out-of-home care?

- The data in charts 3.7 and 3.8 is provided by the year of exit to reunification.
- Reentry is defined as a new removal from the parent or caregiver with placement into out-of-home care. Reunification and reentry can occur while the child remains a court ward, or could coincide with a reactivated dependency petition. In some cases the first or second entry will be through a voluntary placement agreement or a removal of less than 72 hours that did not result in the filing of a dependency petition.
- This data is generated using the Chapin Hall Foster Care Data Archive (FCDA), state customized data profile, which is updated with a new data extract from CHILDS every six months. Because a complete multi-year data set is extracted and updated with each submission to Chapin Hall's FCDA (therefore capturing new and corrected CHILDS data), historical data may have small changes after each update of charts 3.7 and 3.8.
- This is current data, case activity through December 31, 2013. This data will be updated annually.